



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 17, 2000

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Public Comment Sought on Northern Shrimp Amendment 1 PID *Public Meetings to be held in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts throughout August*

Washington, DC – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission announced today the availability of the Public Information Document (PID) for Amendment 1 to the Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for public review and comment. Additionally, the three states involved in northern shrimp management – Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts – have scheduled their public information meetings to gather input on the PID. The details of the state information meetings follow.

August 15, 2000 (7:00 PM)

Maine Department of Marine Resources
Radisson Eastland
157 High Street
Portland, Maine
Contact: Lewis Flagg, (207)624-6550

August 16, 2000 (7:00 PM)

New Hampshire Fish & Game
Urban Forestry Center
Elwyn Road
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Contact: John Nelson (603)868-1095

August 17, 2000 (7:00 PM)

Maine Department of Marine Resources
Holiday Inn
215 High Street
Ellsworth, Maine
Contact: Lewis Flagg, (207)624-6550

August 29, 2000 (7:00 PM)

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Annisquam River Office
30 Emerson Avenue
Gloucester, Massachusetts
Contact: Mike Armstrong, (978)282-0308

Approval of the PID is the first step in developing Amendment 1. The purpose of the PID is to seek public input on the long-term management of northern shrimp stocks. Currently, northern shrimp is managed under a plan that was first developed in 1979 and later updated in 1986. Under this plan, the fishery has been managed through the establishment of fishing seasons, which are set each fall. The plan also allows for the use of gear limitations.

In many ways, the northern shrimp management program has been viewed as a success and an example of how other fisheries should be managed. Much of its success is due to the cooperative nature of the program; with the fishing industry, scientists and managers all working together to develop annual regulations that not only conserve the resource, but are also responsive to the needs of the fishing industry. What the plan lacks is a full suite of management options to provide greater flexibility in the conservation of the resource. The intent of the amendment is to maintain the character of the current program, while expanding the available tools for managing the fishery.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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Following the initial stage of information gathering and public comment, the Section will evaluate potential management alternatives and the impacts of those alternatives; this will most likely occur in late October 2000 when the Section meets to set its annual fishing season. The Section, in consultation with its technical committee and industry advisors, will then develop a draft amendment to the FMP with the preferred management measures identified for public review. Following that review and public comment, the Section will specify the management measures to be included in the new amendment.

Copies of the PID can be obtained by either contacting Vanessa Jones, Administrative Assistant, at (202) 289-6400, or via the Commission's webpage under "Public Input" at www.asmf.org. Comments should be forwarded to Amy Schick, Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1444 Eye Street, N.W., Sixth Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005; (202)289-6051 (fax). **Public comment will be accepted until September 15, 2000.** For more information, please contact Amy Schick at (202) 289-6400, or via email at aschick@asmfc.org.

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NOTE TO PRESS: If you would like to receive the Commission's press releases via email, please contact Tina Berger, Public Affairs & Resource Specialist, at tberger@asmfc.org or fax to (202)289-6051.

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